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NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA

Letter dated 10 October 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach a report prepared by my Government for the information meeting convened by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for non-member States on the development of the Multilateral Investment Agreement.

Unfortunately, the Cuban Government's request to attend this meeting was denied, and Cuba was therefore unable to present its concerns and views on the possible implications of the current negotiations on this Agreement; these negotiations are progressing rapidly, and little is known about them outside OECD itself.

The negotiations on the Multilateral Investment Agreement are of particular interest to Cuba in view of the intention of the Government of the United States of America to use it, in the context of its blockade against my country, to prevent the flow of future investments to Cuba by manipulating the legitimacy of the Cuban nationalizations of the 1960s. These nationalizations, as can be seen in the attached document, were carried out in full conformity with the norms of international law.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 30.

(Signed) Pedro NUÑEZ MOSQUERA
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Report prepared by the Government of Cuba for the information meeting convened by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development for non-member States on the development of the Multilateral Investment Agreement

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In the last few months, the Administration of the United States of America has been negotiating with the European Union, seeking to include new regulations in the Multilateral Investment Agreement currently being prepared by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Within the context of those negotiations, some of the measures being considered may affect Cuba because of the interpretation that United States negotiators are trying to give to the nationalization of United States property undertaken in the late 1950s and early 1960s. One of the objectives of this document is to prevent the distortion of the historical process and the conditions under which such nationalization took place. A secondary objective is to warn the rest of the world about the possible implications of the aforementioned scheme.

2. What is at stake with the Helms-Burton Act goes well beyond the bilateral conflict between Cuba and the United States; this Act shows how this powerful country views the reordering of international relations with its own allies, the developing countries and the multilateral institutions. By creating confusion and resorting to deceit, this country is concocting a plot against Cuba which could be used against other nations in the future.

II. BACKGROUND

3. After six months of futile warnings that the Helms-Burton Act should be repealed, on 3 October 1996 the European Union asked the World Trade Organization (WTO) to appoint an expert panel to examine and adopt decisions on the infringements of the regulations of that organization resulting from the Helms-Burton Act. Canada, Mexico, Japan, Malaysia and Thailand joined the European Union as third parties to the request.

4. The United States Administration threatened to cite national security reasons in order to impose the extraterritorial measures contained in that Act, which would seriously and irresponsibly undermine WTO in its functions of organizing international trade and the world economy.

5. On 11 April of this year, the United States and the European Union reached an "understanding", and it was reported that the United States Administration had undertaken to continue suspending the lawsuits under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and negotiate with the United States Congress the possibility of amending the Act to waive Title IV. In addition, commitments were made to work towards an agreement concerning the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act.

6. The European Union, pursuing the common objective of not weakening WTO, temporarily suspended the proceedings before the WTO panel.

7. Based on this "understanding", the negotiation process relating to the Helms-Burton Act was referred from WTO to OECD, the organization which has been preparing a Multilateral Investment Agreement since 1995.

8. Two years ago, the OECD Ministerial Meeting adopted the following guideline when it set up the Negotiation Group which would draft the Multilateral Investment Agreement:

> "The Multilateral Investment Agreement should provide a wide multilateral structure for international investments, with high standards for the liberalization of investment regimes and investment protection, and containing effective procedures for the settlement of lawsuits".

9. In its two years of work, the Negotiation Group has taken up the issue of nationalization of foreign property only in terms of exceptional cases which could reoccur.

10. At no stage in the preparation of the Agreement was any reference made to previous nationalization. That is recorded in the OECD information note of March 1997 concerning the development of the Agreement:

> "Rapid progress has been made in drafting the provisions of the Agreement on investment protection. This can be attributed to the wide experience acquired by OECD countries in negotiating bilateral investment protection treaties. The provisions of the Agreement are largely based on the principles enshrined in these agreements."

11. Explicitly, the same note explained how the issue of nationalization would be dealt with:

> "(ii) Expropriation
>
> Expropriation, or any other measure having similar effect, whether directly or indirectly, would be permitted only if it is in the public interest, on a non-discriminatory basis, against payment of prompt, adequate and effective compensation, and in accordance with due process of law".

12. In a surprising move, the United States Administration is trying to transform its position, going from the defendant's seat it occupied at WTO to setting forth new measures on international law within the framework of OECD, by means of which it is attempting to define in the Agreement as "illegal and against international law the nationalization of property undertaken" since the end of the 1950s. One of the goals of this scheme would be to deem illegal the nationalization of United States property undertaken by Cuba. In practice, it intends to internationalize Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act, under the umbrella of a multilateral treaty adopted by OECD. Another goal would be to apply these measures to other nations, at the convenience of the United States Administration and Congress.

13. After the "understanding" in April, the United States managed, in its negotiations with the European Union, to isolate the other 13 member countries of OECD.

14. It is obvious that in a partially secret environment and with compartmentalization of information at the political levels of the OECD member countries, United States negotiators will try to take advantage of those conditions to achieve their objectives. In the United States itself, some are requesting information about the decisions made in the negotiations because there have been vast information gaps in this respect.

15. The United States is seeking to rearrange an international agreement for the sole purpose of serving its own foreign policy. The United States is actually taking advantage of its long-standing economic war against Cuba to use it as its test laboratory for future action with the rest of the world.

16. The United States has violated all rules by enacting the Helms-Burton Act, putting itself above the recognized norms of international law. But it refuses to be held accountable for such action. It is dangerous to allow it not only to break rules with impunity but to impose its power once again, taking concessions away from other nations. This will pose a threat to the future: it is just one more step in the accumulation of unilateral actions taken by Washington, D.C., lately, such as self-defining a reduction in its financial obligations to the United Nations; pre-defining the reforms to be undertaken by that institution; and setting itself up as the supreme attorney which "certifies" the good or bad behaviour of other countries in the international struggle against drug trafficking.

III. THE DANGERS AND CONTRADICTIONS RESULTING FROM THE SCHEME CONCOCTED BY THE UNITED STATES

17. In the past four years, the United States has enacted 61 executive laws and decisions applying unilateral trade sanctions against 35 nations, which account for 40 per cent of the world's population. The inconsistency of United States policy goes to such extremes that the President's Export Council issued a report advising him to restrict the use of unilateral sanctions, eliminating extraterritorial sanctions and secondary boycotts. The report uses the Helms-Burton and the D'Amato-Kennedy Acts, and the resulting complications in the international and trade fields, to exemplify this policy.

18. It is interesting to note that the Executive Director of the President's Export Council is Under-Secretary of State Stuart Eizenstat, who on the one hand advises restricting the use of unilateral and extraterritorial sanctions and, on the other, spearheads the task force set up to internationalize the Helms-Burton Act. Alan Larson, United States Assistant Under-Secretary of State and Vice-Chairman of the Negotiation Group in charge of the Agreement since its inception, is the second in command in these negotiations with the European Union.

19. The United States is trying to impose disciplinary measures which "prohibit" investments in property nationalized or expropriated by any country

without compensation and envisages sanctions for those violating its rules. It attempts to apply such retrospective measures to the acts of expropriation carried out at the end of the 1950s. The predefinition of the period from which it plans to consider the nationalization is similar to an Identikit picture of Cuba.

20. United States negotiators are not characterized by having deep knowledge of history, and it would be convenient to jog their memories concerning the changes that took place during those years and thereafter.

21. After the end of the Second World War, several tendencies and movements to decolonize many African, Asian and Caribbean nations became stronger. In Latin America, those forces, together with a sense of nationalism, grew at a fast pace. Some were interested in retrieving and preserving their resources and wealth, and others, like Cuba, tried to build a more righteous system to free itself of the hegemony of its powerful neighbour.

22. All those forces undertook a nationalization process spanning a quarter of a century, from 1950 to 1976. Those years were witness to the Suez Canal intervention; the Chinese, Vietnamese and Cuban acts of expropriation; the Arab and Peruvian nationalization of oil industries during the first half of the 1970s; the nationalization process in Africa in the 1960s and 1970s, in addition to the nationalization that took place in Portugal in the early 1970s. The year 1976, when Venezuela nationalized its oil companies, was the last of the era of major acts of nationalization.

23. The new privatization wave that has swept the world in the last 15 years has included many enterprises which were previously nationalized. It is likely that these new measures which the United States Administration is trying to include in the Agreement will bring about unforeseen complications with other countries and enterprises, a fact which has not been considered by those in Washington who are hatching this plan. These complications will not have anything to do with Cuba.

24. It would not be surprising to find that certain United States multinationals have acquired privatized enterprises which, when they were nationalized without compensation, were formerly owned by, inter alia, British, French, Netherlands, Belgian or Italian companies. Could cases like those come up in Algeria, Indonesia, the Republic of the Congo, Peru, Venezuela and even the Middle East?

25. This would not be the first time that a boomerang effect had surprised United States planners; by trying to act against a given country, they trigger unforeseen situations which then backfire. Such was the case when, from 1959 on, the Central Intelligence Agency encouraged the hijacking of Cuban aircraft. The CIA did not consider that most aircraft were United States-operated, and the practice which they encouraged against Cuba soon spread to their own airlines.

26. Cuba would like to recall that:

(a) The willingness of the Cuban Government to negotiate mutual claims, including the compensation process, has always existed. In December 1996, upon

enactment of Act No. 80 (Cuba's clawback provision against the Helms-Burton Act), the Government states:

"Article 2

"The position of the Government of the Republic of Cuba, as expressed in the nationalization laws promulgated more than 35 years ago, in relation to adequate and just compensation for the expropriated assets of persons and corporations which had United States citizenship or nationality at that time, is hereby reaffirmed";

(b) The United Nations General Assembly, at its forty-seventh session, adopted resolution 47/19, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba", according to which all the Members of that Organization should abstain from promulgating and applying laws and measures whose extraterritorial effects affect the sovereignty of other States and the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction, as well as the freedom of trade and navigation. In conformity with that resolution, countries applying measures of this type should take the necessary steps to repeal or invalidate them.

27. Since 1992, the United Nations General Assembly has adopted five resolutions requesting the United States to abstain from applying extraterritorial laws. At its last session, 137 States reiterated that request.

28. It is Cuba's duty to call attention to, and stress, the following:

- All the Cuban nationalization laws contained provisions relating to adequate compensation, both to nationals and foreigners. Thus, under international practice, Cuba negotiated and signed several global compensation agreements, paying all agreed-upon amounts, except the one owed to Spain (currently being implemented because its validity period is 20 years - 1988-2008). The Governments which submitted claims in favour of their citizens were served and, accordingly, some compensation agreements were signed with them (France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada and Spain). Several small claims were also paid off to Italy through an exchange of notes;

- On many occasions, the Cuban Government has suggested that the United States Government should sit down with it to discuss the compensation issue along with other matters; this request has always been rejected;

- Throughout almost four decades, United States Administrations have not been interested in receiving compensation for nationalized property. This is the confusion the United States is trying to spread among those working on the Multilateral Investment Agreement and the OECD member nations. The United States Government is only intent on overthrowing and wiping out the Cuban Revolution;

- All the Titles of the Helms-Burton Act are totally unacceptable, for this Act is an attempt by the United States of America to determine

the political, economic and institutional order of a sovereign, independent State, an objective which is not in line with the Charter of the United Nations and violates the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States;

- The recent action taken by the United States Congress shows that, regardless of the final form adopted by the Foreign Service Reform Act, it will always be at cross-purposes with the understanding reached with the European Union in April. Besides keeping Title IV of the Helms-Burton Act, the notion is to spread it to the rest of the world, which will pose a constant threat to all investors, including those unrelated to Cuba. The lack of answers by the Executive Power clearly shows that there is no intention to honour the obligations entered into with the European partners;

- Ongoing negotiations are not about a trade dispute between the European Union and the United States, but about a political issue affecting the sovereignty of the European Union member States, which could go beyond the scope of action of the Commission;

- Any arrangement or understanding agreed upon which would harm Cuba within the global framework of the Agreement may become a dangerous legal precedent likely to be applied to any country in the future. Cuba has endured almost four decades of blockade and acts of aggression. Other countries could now fall prey to such actions.

APPENDIX

Information on the Cuban nationalization process

1. By seeking to confuse the rest of the world, the United States has unearthed the issue of American property nationalized and not compensated for by Cuba's Revolutionary Government. The Helms-Burton Act is not aimed at securing compensation. Its sole and real purpose is to keep other countries' enterprises from investing in Cuba.

2. From the beginning of the disagreement with Cuba, the United States Government has tried to tout the nationalization issue to defend its acts of aggression. This has only been an excuse, because there was no willingness whatsoever to solve this problem.

3. United States Administrations have been interested, for over four decades, only in overthrowing the Cuban Revolutionary Government. This is tacitly repeated in the designs of the so-called Helms-Burton Act, which expressly states its desire to return Cuba to the status quo on 1 January 1959, when Batista's tyrannical rule was overthrown. It does not refer to August 1960, when United States enterprises were nationalized.

4. The Cuban Government has reiterated throughout all these years its willingness to include the compensation issue on a broad agenda to resolve the dispute through discussion. Therefore, what the United States will try to insert into the Agreement has nothing to do with compensation or ways to implement it.

CUBAN NATIONALIZATION AND COMPENSATION

5. The Cuban nationalization process affected all private ownership of the main means of production on the basis of a political, revolutionary concept, determined by the desire of the people and the Government to build a socialist society.

6. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1974 (resolution 3281 (XXIX)), recognized the right of each State to freely exercise full, permanent sovereignty, including possession, use and disposal, over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activities. In this respect, it is established that States are entitled:

> "To nationalize, expropriate or transfer ownership of foreign property, in which case appropriate compensation should be paid by the State adopting such measures, taking into account its relevant laws and regulations and all circumstances that the State considers pertinent. In any case where the question of compensation gives rise to controversy, it shall be settled under the domestic law of the nationalizing State and by its tribunals, unless it is freely and mutually agreed by all States concerned that other peaceful means be sought on the basis of the sovereign equality of States

and in accordance with the principle of free choice of means" (ibid., art. 2, para. 2 (c)).

7. The Revolutionary Government's legitimate desire, under international law, was to exercise the right of nationalization to attain one of the Cuban Revolution's basic goals: to recover its full sovereignty over the nation's wealth and natural resources.

* * *

Agrarian reform

- When the United States occupation army managed Japan's economy, it undertook an agrarian reform whereby it distributed land and paid compensation to the former landowners through 30-year, 2.5 per cent interest-rate bonds. The agrarian reform supervised by that same Army in the Republic of Korea was even more drastic; Japanese landowners, who owned almost all the land, were expropriated without any compensation.

- On 17 May 1959, Cuba's Agrarian Reform Act was promulgated. This Act applied to both Cuban nationals and foreigners and recognized the constitutional right to compensation of those whose property was expropriated. The so-called bonds of the Republic were issued, yielding an annual interest rate no higher than 4.5 per cent, to be paid off after 20 years, and their owners were granted a 10-year income tax exemption and other benefits.

- Compared with the reforms undertaken in Japan and the Republic of Korea, Cuba's agrarian reform was considerably more lenient to the former proprietors and landowners. However, in the Cuban case, the United States Administration claimed immediate cash compensation for that country's enterprises, which owned 40 per cent of the arable land.

- In its diplomatic note dated 12 June 1959, the United States Government stated:

> "The United States recognizes that, according to international law, a State is entitled to expropriate within its jurisdiction for public purposes in the absence of contract provisions or any other agreement to the contrary; however, this right must be accompanied by the relevant obligation a State may have entered into in the sense that such expropriation shall entail the payment of prompt, adequate and effective compensation."

* * *

8. On 22 February 1960, in a note addressed to the United States Government, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba stated:

"The Revolutionary Government, in accordance with its intention of resuming, through the diplomatic channel, the negotiations already initiated on the pending issues between Cuba and the United States of America, has decided to appoint a commission for such purposes, which will be able to start its negotiations in Washington on the date agreement upon by both Parties.

"The Revolutionary Government of Cuba would like to make clear, however, that the resumption and further development of such negotiations will not be subject to any unilateral measure adopted by your country's Government which may prejudge the outcome of the aforementioned discussions or may cause damage to the economy of the Cuban people. It seems obvious to add that the adherence of Your Excellency's Government to this point of view will not only contribute to the improvement of relations between the two countries, but will also reaffirm the spirit of fraternal friendship that has tied and still ties our peoples."

9. Washington's response to this note totally rejected the request for the suspension of all acts of aggression:

"The United States Government cannot accept the negotiation terms expressed in Your Excellency's note. Therefore, unilateral measures will be adopted by the United States Government which may affect Cuba's economy and its people, either by the Legislative or the Executive branches."

The United States Administration was not inclined to find a solution to the compensation issues and the differences it had with the Cuban Government. Its only interest was to defeat it.

10. In April 1960, a month after sending the note in reply, two officials of the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) met with President Ydigoras of Guatemala, obtaining his authorization to train a military force which would invade Cuba. In May of that year, the Trax Training Base became operational in that Central American country, and a few days later the New York-based firm Thompson & Cornwall Inc., under a CIA contract, built a modern airport from which nine months later B-26 aircraft would take off to bomb Cuban cities and C-54s, filled with paratroopers, would fly out towards the Bay of Pigs.

11. Act No. 851 of 6 July 1960, issued by the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, authorizing the nationalization of United States property, guaranteed the payment of compensation to the former owners and, practically at the constitutional level, defined the way to create the Compensation Fund. That Act can also be seen as a national security measure. It should be noted that it was promulgated three months after the invasion preparations had started.

12. It is not hard to imagine the frailty of Cuba's national security in the midst of that hostile situation, when the vital points for the functioning of the country's society and economy were operated by United States enterprises, which led the pack of those nationalized on 6 August 1990. Among them were:

- Cuban Electric Company: generated 95 per cent of the country's electricity;

- International Telephone and Telegraph: operated 100 per cent of the telephone system and 80 per cent of the telegraph network;

- Two oil refineries (Standard Oil and Texaco): processed 80 per cent of the oil consumed by the country;

- Eight sugar corporations: controlled one third of the production of sugar, the country's main export product;

- Two nickel factories: produced 100 per cent of the country's second most important export product;

- Three banks: granted 25 per cent of all the country's loans;

- Four tyre factories: covered 100 per cent of the market.

13. From the second half of 1959, most of these enterprises suspended their investment and maintenance plans. They could receive orders from Washington at any time to paralyse Cuba's economy. Such a situation took place at the end of July 1960 when the Cuban Government purchased crude oil from other countries, seeking to diversify the sources and not to depend exclusively on the fuel supplied by United States corporations. The then Secretary of State instructed United States oil companies to refuse to process that oil. The next step would have been to paralyse Cuba by shutting out the supply of fuel.

* * *

Compensation foreseen for expropriated United States property

- The so-called bonds of the Republic were issued to pay compensation to nationalized property. There were experts who would assess the assets in order to produce payment through the amortization of such bonds. This amortization would take place against a fund called "Fund for the payment of compensation for the expropriation of United States assets and national enterprises". The fund would get 25 per cent of the sugar export earnings, which would surpass the three million tons exported to the United States, and the bonds would yield an annual interest rate of 2 per cent, to be redeemed after a period of no less than 30 years.

* * *

14. The United States Government has stated on several occasions that the nationalization laws applied by Cuba to United States property were discriminatory, in that they were specifically aimed against that nation's subjects. Actually, the nationalization laws enacted in those years comprised all the main means of production belonging to Cuban, United States and other foreign nationals. But in the particular case of the United States, its Administration had in those months unleashed an undeclared war against Cuba. Its climax was the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961, rated by United States historians and specialists as the biggest aggressive operation schemed by the Central Intelligence Agency aimed at overthrowing a foreign government.

15. The invasion failed, although at a high cost of human lives and material damage for which there can never be compensation.

16. President Kennedy assumed full responsibility for that invasion on Friday, 21 April 1961, when, at a press conference in the State Department, he stated:

> "An old aphorism says that victory has a hundred parents and defeat is an orphan."

Three days later, on Monday, 24 April, the White House released the following communiqué to the press:

> "President Kennedy has stated from the beginning that, as President, he assumes full responsibility. He has stated so on all occasions and states so again now ... The President strongly opposes anyone, within or outside the Administration, who tries to sidetrack that responsibility."

Even though the United States Administration assumed full responsibility for that aggression, the Cuban Government did not let up in its efforts to find ways to settle those differences.

17. Nine months after the Bay of Pigs invasion, at the Eighth Consultative Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the American Republics, held in January 1962, the then President of Cuba stated:

> "From the initial deterioration of Cuba-United States relations up to now, Cuba has always been willing to negotiate through the diplomatic channel or by any other appropriate means, the ongoing differences between the United States and Cuba. Furthermore, as our Council of Ministers stated: Cuba would have paid compensation to United States citizens and interests affected by the laws of the Revolution if economic acts of aggression had not stood in the way and if that country's Government had been willing to negotiate on the basis of respect for the will, dignity and sovereignty of our people."

18. In 1974, on the completion of its work, the Cuba Program of the Claims Commission submitted a report to the United States Congress, which stated:

> "The aim of the United States Congress in arranging to submit a certification of the amounts of those losses to the Secretary of State was to make available to the aforementioned official the relevant information that would be useful to him in the future negotiations leading to an agreement on the liquidation of claims with a friendly government in Cuba when diplomatic relations were resumed. So, in effect, this Program can be termed a previous liquidation of all claims ..."

19. The pressures that United States corporations could exert with the aim of reaching an agreement with the Revolutionary Government of Cuba to obtain compensation became an embarrassment to United States Administrations. Since their main objective was, and still is, to destroy the Cuban social system, those Administrations adopted other measures aimed at "taking" corporations "out of the game". From the certificates issued by the Cuba Program of the Claims

Commission, the Treasury Department allowed United States natural and legal persons to deduct from their taxes the total or partial value of the lost property.

20. In that respect, the compensation currently claimed from Cuba would not be from the corporations or natural persons, for they have already received compensation through the deduction from their taxes. Therefore, the only claimant would be the United States Treasury Department if a global compensation agreement were eventually discussed.

21. A second aspect to be considered: 70 per cent of the value of the claims unilaterally accepted by that Congressional Commission was concentrated in 26 large corporations. In the huge ocean of takeovers, mergers and liquidations which characterizes the business world, particularly in the United States, many of these 26 large corporations have disappeared. After almost four decades, a sizable portion of those enterprises which were originally United States-owned have ceased to exist or have ceased to be United States owned, or have been transferred to other activities, or what is left of them is only a package of shares in the safe of another corporation.

22. As is well known, from the beginning of the current decade, an increasing number of representatives of large United States enterprises visited Cuba prior to the adoption of the Helms-Burton Act. They came on fact-finding trips for future business deals in the event the United States blockade was finally lifted. Some of these powerful companies owned shares of nationalized enterprises which had long disappeared and their interests were far removed from the traditional branches in which they operated. They leaned towards new and more dynamic branches with more prospects and more in line with the activities carried out by those visitors' corporations. On the other hand, many of these visitors were concerned that the Treasury Department could claim from them the return of the amounts deducted from taxes (with a compound annual rate of 6 per cent) in the event that they received any direct compensation from Cuba.

23. It is therefore not likely that all United States enterprises will have claims on the Cuban Government. In any case, such claims should come from the United States Treasury Department.

24. The United States has always claimed "prompt, adequate and effective" compensation from Cuba. While the United States incorporated the lump sum agreements into its legal system and adopted the International Claims Act in 1946, its policy towards Cuba has been to impose a blockade and to commit other acts of aggression, not to negotiate.

25. In the midst of the 1992 Presidential election campaign in the United States, the United States Congress passed the Torricelli Amendment, which was aimed at tightening the economic blockade, prohibiting the subsidiaries of United States corporations based in other nations from carrying out trade activities with Cuba, and adopting other measures which unilaterally interfered with the freedom of maritime transportation. They concluded that it was time for the final blow against the Cuban Revolution. That Act was widely criticized by the international community.

26. Forty months later, the same Congress and another President passed the Helms-Burton Act, which was focused on the economic field, and in this case was specifically aimed at paralysing and reversing the foreign investment process in Cuba.

27. Some questions arise in the face of these acts of aggression: What has changed? Why was this new element not included in the Torricelli Amendment and why was it necessary to draft a new Act?

28. The Torricelli Amendment did not in any way relate to foreign investments since they were not important to the Cuban economy at the time. Once more major joint ventures were established, the idea arose of hampering Cuba's development and its integration into the rest of the world. In enacting the Helms-Burton Act, the United States Administration and Congress in fact reaffirmed that the foreign investment process in Cuba was going along well; otherwise, it would be pointless to stir up all the anger and opposition which it generated.

29. In addition to the problems caused by the Helms-Burton Act to Cuba's external finances and economy, the Act endeavours to give orders to non-United States enterprises. Despite all its efforts to reverse the foreign investment process, it should be pointed out that none of the enterprises with investments in Cuba has withdrawn.

30. The Helms-Burton Act was not passed to benefit the former owners who had submitted claims to the Cuba Program of the Claims Commission, since the real claimant should be the United States Treasury Department.

31. The former owners received compensation, either in full or in part, by deducting from their taxes the value of their property. Therefore, since the Treasury Department did not make any claims and the Act encouraged the filing of lawsuits in the United States, the intent is to scare and to paralyse the investment process in Cuba, while at the same time recognizing the right to make claims of Cuban-American citizens, who at the time of the nationalization did not have that right.

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Djamel MOKTEFI (Algeria)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 19 September 1997, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations" and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.

2. The Fifth Committee considered the item at its 3rd, 4th, and 8th meetings, on 30 September and 1 and 13 October 1997. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/52/SR.3, 4 and 8).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

Financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the management of peacekeeping assets: surplus asset storage facilities and mission start-up kits at the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi (A/50/907);

(b) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the management of peacekeeping assets: surplus asset storage facilities and mission start-up kits at the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi (A/50/985);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/51/803);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi (A/51/905);

(e) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the comments of the Joint Inspection Unit on the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (A/52/380);

(f) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the management of peacekeeping assets: surplus asset storage facilities and mission start-up kits at the United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi (A/52/407);

Management of peacekeeping assets: field assets control system

(g) Report of the Secretary-General (A/51/957);

(h) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/52/407) (see also (f) above).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.5/52/L.3

4. At the 8th meeting, on 13 October, the representative of Mexico introduced a draft resolution entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations" (A/C.5/52/L.3), submitted by the Chairman on the basis of informal consultations.

5. At the same meeting, the Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/52/L.3 without a vote (see para. 6).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

6. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

The General Assembly,

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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS LOGISTICS BASE AT BRINDISI, ITALY

Recalling section XIV of its resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994,

Recalling also its decision 50/500 of 17 September 1996 and section VIII of its resolution 51/218 E of 17 June 1997 on the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base,[1] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2] the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the audit of the United Nations Logistics Base,[3] the comments of the Joint Inspection Unit thereon[4] and the views expressed by Member States in the Fifth Committee,[5]

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy;[1]

2. Also takes note of the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;[2]

3. Further takes note of the cost estimates proposed by the Secretary-General[6] and recommended by the Advisory Committee[7] for the maintenance of the United Nations Logistics Base for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997, amounting to 7,875,000 United States dollars gross (7,375,200 dollars net), the ad hoc financing of which will be reflected in the respective performance reports of the peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997;

4. Notes that, according to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, a more precise cost-benefit analysis should be carried out,[8] requests the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis on the operation of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, for consideration by the General Assembly during the first part of its resumed fifty-second session, and requests the Advisory Committee to assist the Secretary-General in this regard by providing more specific guidance for conducting such an analysis;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, without prejudice to the decision of the General Assembly on the future of the Logistics Base, to make proposals, as

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[1] A/51/905.

[2] A/52/407.

[3] A/51/803.

[4] A/52/380, annex.

[5] A/C.5/52/SR.3 and 4.

[6] A/50/907.

[7] A/50/985.

[8] A/52/407, paras. 4 and 18.

appropriate, for different sources or modes of financing, including self-financing mechanisms, and to consider the possibility of expanding the use of the Logistics Base to other agencies and programmes of the United Nations, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme, as recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 18 of its report,[2] and to make this information available so as to enable the Assembly to take a decision on the future of the Logistics Base, in the context of a coherent strategy for logistic support, during the first part of its resumed fifty-second session;

6. Authorizes the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount of 4,207,500 dollars for the clearance of the backlog situation in the Logistics Base;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly during the first part of its resumed fifty-second session on the liquidation of the clearance of the backlog referred to in his report;[1]

8. Authorizes the Secretary-General to enter into commitments on a monthly basis in the amount of 812,100 dollars for the maintenance of the Logistics Base for the period from 16 October 1997 to 30 June 1998;

9. Decides that the additional appropriation, as may be required, will be taken up in the context of the performance reports on peacekeeping operations for that period;

10. Authorizes the Secretary-General to provide for a civilian establishment consisting of ten Professional, six Field Service and twenty-eight locally recruited staff;

11. Endorses the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 13 of its report[2] that the level of staffing should be reviewed in the light of the volume of operations, and requests the Secretary-General to provide this information to the General Assembly during the first part of its resumed fifty-second session;

12. Encourages the Secretary-General to use existing audit capability to provide the functions referred to in paragraph 34 of his report;[1]

13. Decides to refer to the issue of resourcing policy as proposed in section VIII of the report of the Secretary-General in the context of its deliberations on the future of the Logistics Base, as referred to in paragraph 5 of the present resolution;

14. Approves the policies proposed in sections X and XI of the report of the Secretary-General;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to provide detailed information on the communications relay system and functions of the Logistics Base;

II

MANAGEMENT OF PEACEKEEPING ASSETS: FIELD ASSETS CONTROL SYSTEM

Recalling section VIII, paragraph 4, of its resolution 51/218 E of 17 June 1997,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the field assets control system[9] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2] as well as the views expressed by Member States in the Fifth Committee,[5]

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the field assets control system;[9]

2. Also takes note of the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;[2]

3. Endorses the proposal for the development and implementation of the field assets control system described in paragraphs 4 to 22 of the report of the Secretary-General;

4. Takes note of the intention of the Secretary-General to continue to develop the field mission logistics system described in paragraphs 25 and 26 of his report, and decides to consider this question during the second part of its resumed fifty-second session.

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[9] A/51/957.

United Nations A/52/454

General Assembly

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Original: English

Fifty-second session
Agenda item 74

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At its fifty-first session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 51/48 of 10 December 1996, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", in which the General Assembly:

> "2. *Calls upon* the only State in the region that is not yet party to the Treaty [on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons] and has not declared its intention to do so, to accede to the Treaty without further delay, and not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, and to place all unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards as an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security;
>
> "3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution."

2. The present report is being submitted pursuant to paragraph 3 of the above resolution. Apart from the material forwarded by the International Atomic Energy Agency (see annexes I and II), the Secretary-General has not received any additional information since the submission of his last report on the subject (A/51/446) to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session.

97-27267 (E) 151097 161097

Annex I

Resolution GC(41)/RES/25 of 3 October 1997 of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency

The General Conference,

(a) *Recognizing* the importance of the non-proliferation of nuclear-weapons — both globally and regionally — in enhancing international peace and security,

(b) *Mindful* of the usefulness of the Agency's safeguards system as a reliable means of verification of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy,

(c) *Concerned* by the grave consequences, endangering peace and security, of the presence in the Middle East region of nuclear activities not wholly devoted to peaceful purposes,

(d) *Welcoming* the initiatives regarding the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, in the Middle East and recent initiatives regarding arms control in the region,

(e) *Recognizing* that full realization of these objectives would be promoted by participation of all States of the region,

(f) *Commending* the efforts of the Agency concerning the application of safeguards in the Middle East and the positive response of some States in concluding a full-scope safeguards agreement, and

(g) *Recalling* its resolution GC(40)/RES/22,

1. *Takes note* of the Director General's report in document GOV/2941-GC(41)/16;

2. *Affirms* the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step in enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone;

3. *Calls upon* all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and appropriate steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a mutually and effectively verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, and *invites* the countries concerned to adhere to international non-proliferation regimes, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as a means of complementing participation in a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and of strengthening peace and security in the region;

4. *Takes note* of the importance of the ongoing bilateral Middle East peace negotiations and the activities of the multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security in promoting mutual confidence and security in the Middle East, including establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone and calls on the Director General, as requested by the participants, to render all necessary assistance to the Working Group in promoting that objective;

5. *Requests* the Director General to continue consultations with the States of the Middle East to facilitate the early application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region as relevant to the preparation of model agreements, as a necessary step towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, referred to in resolution GC(XXXVII)/RES/627;

6. *Calls upon* all States in the region to extend their fullest cooperation to the Director General in the fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to him in the preceding paragraph;

7. *Further calls upon* all States in the region to take measures, including confidence-building and verification measures, aimed at establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

8. *Calls upon* all other States, especially those with a special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to render all assistance to the Director General by facilitating the implementation of this resolution; and

9. *Requests* the Director General to submit to the Board of Governors and to the General Conference at its forty-second regular session a report on the implementation of this resolution and to include in the provisional agenda for that session an item entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East".

Annex II

Presidential Statement

In the context of the agenda item on the application of the International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards in the Middle East, the General Conference requests the Director General to invite experts from the Middle East and other areas to a technical workshop on Safeguards, verification technologies, and other related experience including experience in various regional contexts.

It calls upon the Director General to commence the preparation, in consultation and coordination with the parties concerned, with a view to developing an agenda and modalities that would help ensure a successful workshop. Future proposals on workshops in the framework of the above-mentioned agenda item shall be submitted by mutual consent.

United Nations A/52/455

General Assembly

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Fifty-second session
Agenda item 89

Questions relating to information

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 51/138 B of 13 December 1996, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its nineteenth session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in that resolution.

2. The following documents related to topics covered by the resolution were submitted to the Committee on Information at the first part of its nineteenth session, held from 13 to 19 May 1997:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General transmitting an evaluation of the functioning of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (A/AC.198/1997/2) and note by the Secretary-General containing his comments on that evaluation (A/AC.198/1997/2/Add.1);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the review of publications by the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/1997/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the review of publications produced by the Department of Public Information in the sphere of development (A/AC.198/1997/4);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the integration of United Nations information centres with field offices of the United Nations Development Programme (A/AC.198/1997/5);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the evaluation of the United Nations information centres (A/AC.198/1997/6);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee in 1996 (A/AC.198/1997/7);

(g) Report of the Secretary-General containing observations and suggestions by Member States and international organizations on ways and means of furthering the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries (A/AC.198/1997/8).

3. The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information provided additional substantive information in his opening statement to the Committee.

4. For its resumed session held on 3 September 1997, the Committee also had before it a conference room paper in which the Secretary-General conveyed his proposals regarding measures in the context of the reorientation of United Nations public information activities. The report of the Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities, entitled "Global vision, local voice: a strategic communications programme for the United Nations" was also circulated to the Committee in a conference room paper for its information.

5. The deliberations of the Committee on Information at its nineteenth session are reflected in its report to the General Assembly.[1] The present report is intended to update the information previously provided, avoiding, as much as possible, duplication of the material contained in the reports submitted to the Committee. The report is focused on the policies and strategies of the Department of Public Information, in accordance with resolution 51/138 B and the directives of the Secretary-General.

II. Overview

6. Since my previous report on questions relating to information (A/51/406), the Department of Public Information has continued to enhance its outreach efforts by strengthening its partnerships with influential media organizations, leaders of civil society, intellectual and educational groups, among others, and by utilizing information technology to its fullest capacity, while continuing to make gains in outreach through the traditional media: press, radio and television. It may be recalled that, in a letter dated 17 March 1997 addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/51/829), I had identified as a principal challenge the need for a strengthened communications and information operation that would help to increase global support for the Organization. In pursuit of that goal, I convened the Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities, composed of communications experts from both within and outside the United Nations system.

7. The report of the Task Force, entitled "Global vision, local voice: a strategic communications programme for the United Nations", has been issued. As indicated in my proposals for the reform of the United Nations announced on 14 July 1997 (see A/51/950) and in a conference room paper circulated to the Committee on Information (see para. 4 above), I concur with the conceptual approach of the Task Force and the thrust of its recommendations, which include:

(a) Placing the communications function at the heart of the strategic management of the Organization and

consolidating all communications activities under a strong senior official who would be part of my immediate team, in order to turn the United Nations into an effective modern communication-oriented organization;

(b) Strengthening the Organization's capacity to communicate at the country level, so that the global messages, activities and information of the United Nations both reflect and are tailored to a meaningful local context. This will entail establishing imaginative local partnerships, in close cooperation with Governments;

(c) Completing the process of integrating United Nations information centres into the offices of United Nations resident coordinators, but with a much stronger system of feedback and accountability. In order to ensure the effective delivery of communications and information programmes, the resident coordinators should work closely with and report to the senior official in charge of United Nations communications activities;

(d) Creating a culture of communications throughout the Organization, with responsibility for public diplomacy being borne by all senior officials, ambassadors and the larger United Nations family;

(e) Recognizing the role of the General Assembly in providing strategic guidance and direction for the communications and information function, while giving the Secretariat much greater responsibility for determining the methods with which mandated goals will be met.

8. I have also received recommendations in this regard from the Executive Coordinator for Reform and the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, and taken into account the views of the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information. Accordingly, I have reflected in my report A/52/303, entitled: "United Nations reform: measures and proposals", a request for the post for the communications and information function to be at the level of Under-Secretary-General. This reflects the importance that I attach to the role of communications, not as a support function but as an integral part of the substantive programme of the United Nations. The new entity will be known as the Office for Communications and Public Information. This dual change, and the leadership role that I envisage for communications and information, will ensure that a communications dimension is effectively integrated into the work of all departments of the Organization. Meeting the communications needs of these departments will be a central priority for the new Office.

9. In view of my regular, direct and continuous contact with the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General, the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for External Relations and the Speechwriters' Unit, I believe that these units should remain part of my Office. Given, however, the imperative of establishing a consolidated communications operation, the Under-Secretary-General will establish both strategic and close day-to-day working relations with these units in order to ensure that they operate as part of a fully integrated communications function through effective and substantive coordination.

10. With regard to United Nations information centres and services, a comprehensive review of this field network will incorporate the complex, ongoing process of integrating information centres in developing countries, as approved by consensus by the General Assembly. Further integration will be completed along the lines indicated by the Assembly, that is, on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the views of the host country, and on the understanding that the information function and autonomy of the centres will not be adversely affected. As I have repeatedly indicated, integration entails a unified approach in the field, with common premises and one flag. In integrated centres, resident coordinators will be responsible to the head of the Office for Communications and Public Information for the development and execution of communications plans. In industrialized countries, where the United Nations information centres are the principal United Nations presence, a case-by-case review will envisage advanced partnerships with members of the United Nations system and with United Nations-oriented groups, such as United Nations associations, depending on their capacity. The use of national personnel for programme delivery will be stressed, and cost-effective and professional criteria will be applied in all field offices. Moreover, information centres should be provided with sufficient resources, in particular those in countries in which local media are less developed.

11. My recommendations are contained in the above-mentioned report A/52/303, which will be before the appropriate intergovernmental bodies during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly. I will ensure that the approved proposals are elaborated by the Under-Secretary-General of the proposed Office for Communications and Public Information and professionally implemented. This will be achieved by building on specific accomplishments, consolidating those activities that have been effective, sharpening the focus on specific themes and reorienting United Nations public information operations within a dynamic communications approach.

III. Electronic communication and use of the Internet

12. As called for in paragraph 22 of resolution 51/138 B, the Department has continued to take full advantage of new information technologies, including the use of the Internet and electronic publishing capacities, for the efficient production and more extensive and timely dissemination of information products, while retaining to the extent possible the use of traditional and mass media channels. Every section and unit of the Department has incorporated this technology into their day-to-day work. Furthermore, this work has led to close cooperation with other Secretariat departments.

13. With the establishment of the Information Technology Section in April 1997, the Department has formalized its efforts to play a leading role in the dissemination of electronic information over the Internet. Global awareness of the United Nations home page continues to grow, as it can be accessed from some 114 countries on a 24-hour basis. The popularity of this site is evidenced by the high number of hits: from 1 January to 31 July 1997, there were more than 13 million. The United Nations home page has also received a number of awards from prestigious reviewers and magazines.

14. The Department has worked closely with the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics of the Economic and Social Council and reported regularly on achievements and plans for the United Nations Web site. It has also continued to chair the Interdepartmental Working Group on Internet Matters, established with the aim of coordinating and assisting in the further development of the United Nations home page. In addition, the Publications Board, in December 1996, adopted the strategy paper entitled "Internet: the United Nations and the electronic information future", which represents a Secretariat-wide effort to agree on a common approach to the new medium.

15. In accordance with guidelines set by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Department established the United Nations reform home page in April and regularly posted on it all documents on this issue. The highest number of accesses ever recorded on a United Nations home page were for the report of the Secretary-General, entitled "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform" (A/51/950). In addition, that home page provided live video coverage of the reform announcement by the Secretary-General.

16. Another significant milestone in the use by the Department of the Internet was the coverage of the special session of the General Assembly, which was convened to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21,[2] and which was held from 23 to 27 June 1997. With the help of Media-on-Demand, an Internet service provider, the entire proceedings of the special session were transmitted live over the Internet from the General Assembly Hall, at no cost to the Organization. This was the first time that any meeting of the General Assembly was made available live in video and audio format on the Internet.

17. The Department is also continuing its efforts to bring the information available on its Web site in French as close to the English version as possible, with additional French documents being made available on an ongoing basis. The Spanish language page is still in a pilot project phase, but continuing to grow. It was recently recognized with an award by Mundo Latino, a Web search engine, as one of the best Spanish language home pages on the Internet.

18. In May, the Department held a workshop on Web site management, open to staff members of the Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It has also continued to provide assistance to a number of departments and offices in order to help them to maintain their own home pages.

19. Greater use of the Internet has led to savings for the Organization. In February, for example, print-runs of press releases were cut by 25 per cent, as all press releases are now available on the United Nations home page before being made available in print. The Department is also using new technologies to promote and distribute its products. Accordingly, United Nations photographs, video clips and radio news bulletins are posted on a daily and weekly basis for the benefit of millions of Internet users, as well as for the use of media organizations throughout the world. The Internet has also supplemented the outreach through traditional means and redissemination channels, as advance copies of all print products are uploaded to the United Nations home page as soon as they become available.

20. The Department has also become the focal point for the growing number of electronic mail queries addressed to the United Nations. These requests for information are answered electronically and the public is encouraged to find answers to their queries from the Web site itself. This approach has significantly reduced the use of paper and the distribution of printed documents.

IV. Ongoing public information activities

21. In accordance with the mandate set out in General Assembly resolution 51/138 B and in order to meet the objectives set by the Secretary-General, the activities of the Department, as the focal point for the public information tasks of the United Nations, continue to be strengthened and improved.

22. The Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General is the main contact point with the world press covering the United Nations, particularly with the media representatives accredited at Headquarters. Through the daily briefings given by the Spokesman and the increasing number of one-on-one contacts with journalists, the Office provides authoritative and timely information on the daily activities of the Secretary-General, as well as on peacekeeping operations, peacemaking, humanitarian assistance and a wide range of economic and social issues.

23. The Assistant Secretary-General maintains direct contacts with senior representatives of the international media. An important outgrowth of this cooperation was the World Television Forum held at Headquarters on 21 and 22 November 1996, which was co-sponsored by the Department of Public Information, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy and Radio Televisione Italiana. Nearly 150 broadcasting professionals from around the world took part and discussed the role of television in covering United Nations-related issues and promoting the objectives of the Organization.

24. The Media Division continues to provide press releases, photographic, television and radio coverage and programmes, video feature productions and technical services to the media. In spite of budgetary constraints and the post reduction exercise, the production of press releases in the two working languages (English and French) continued. The current financial situation has, however, impacted on the Department's ability to reissue press releases originating from United Nations agencies and offices away from Headquarters.

25. The Department has undertaken a number of important initiatives to enhance the production, delivery and impact of its radio programmes, as called for in paragraph 21 of resolution 51/138 B. In April, the Secretary-General was the guest of the first United Nations Radio international live interview, which was broadcast from New York in cooperation with eight regional and international broadcasting networks from five regions of the world. In July, a similar one-hour interview programme also hosted the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, while the newly appointed United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was the guest of the programme broadcast in September. The Department, through this and other innovative approaches, is fostering more effective cooperation with broadcast media networks. A feasibility study on the technological, financial and managerial implications of the development of a United Nations international radio broadcasting capacity will be undertaken before the end of the year.

26. In addition to news coverage, documentary radio programmes, such as the two series, "The Child Sex Trade" and "A Story of War and Rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina", which won 1997 New York Festival awards, continue to be broadcast on a regular basis by national, regional and international broadcasting stations in most regions of the world. These and other programmes, which are adapted into 15 languages, help make the work and priorities of the United Nations more relevant to diverse audiences throughout the world.

27. In addition to the coverage of the special session of the General Assembly held in June 1997, high profile activities of United Nations Television included the live, via satellite, coverage of the Cyprus peace talks held at Amenia, New York. On a trial basis, television news production services have been provided to resident correspondents at no charge to them and at no cost to the Department. This initiative has resulted in the production of television news stories that otherwise would not have been produced and brought United Nations issues to audiences around the world, such as those of the World Television Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

28. The Department has also commissioned a feasibility study on the integration of the databases of the photo, film and audio libraries which, under the proposed system, would be accessible to both the public as well as the Department's producers.

29. News feature and documentary production continued to cover United Nations activities. Among feature productions released in 1997 were "Secrets in the Sands" on biological warfare and "A Cyber-Tale of Three Cities" which depicts teenagers on different continents communicating over the Internet about the urban problems facing their communities. Award-winning releases included "Menace of Land Mines" and two featurettes from the "UN in Action" series which won news awards at the Cable News Network (CNN) World Report Contributor's Conference, held in May 1997. The "UN in Action" series, in five languages, continues to reach some 200 million viewers a

week with short news features on the activities of the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system around the world. In 1997, the weekly talk show "World Chronicle" gained an important new cable distribution outlet throughout North America through the International Channel. Television coverage of the food situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which was widely picked up by international television redisseminators, was an example of the Department's evolving quick reaction approach to important stories to which the Organization has unique access. A retrospective of United Nations films and videos produced over four decades was screened at the fifty-fourth Venice International Film Festival, representing industry recognition of the role of United Nations short and long feature productions since the 1940s.

30. One of the Department's most effective means of communicating information on United Nations activities to global audiences is through non-governmental organizations and other groups in civil society. All 1,514 organizations associated with the Department have proven public information programmes, within their national communities, which can provide information on United Nations activities on health, women, human rights, the environment and other issues. Through the Non-Governmental Organization Resource Centre, non-governmental organizations have access to United Nations documentation and press releases, as well as to the optical disk system and a United Nations system video library. The weekly briefing continues to attract capacity audiences in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium, where they have opportunity to speak with United Nations officials, delegates and representatives of other organizations working on the most current United Nations issues and developments.

31. The fiftieth Annual Conference of the Department of Public Information for Non-Governmental Organizations was held at Headquarters from 10 to 12 September 1997, under the theme Building Partnerships. Over 2,200 representatives of non-governmental organizations registered for the Conference —the largest audience ever. The opening session was telecast to Geneva, where representatives of non-governmental organizations gathered in a parallel meeting. Among other things, the Conference reviewed milestones in the relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations and looked at the best examples of volunteering and socially-responsible projects.

32. The guided tour of Headquarters delivers the Organization's message to nearly half a million visitors a year, in particular students and other groups from the host country. The restriction on the size of groups for security reasons and the resulting increase in the operation's staff costs, however, continue to have a negative impact on the Department's ability to generate revenue. Efforts are continuing, nonetheless, to address security concerns with a view to eventually increasing the size of groups. In addition, possibilities for assistance from outside sources are being explored to upgrade the tour route. Moreover, by year's end, the tour operation should be linked with the Speakers Bureau in a new integrated scheduling and reservations system that is replacing the Wang-based custom-designed one. It will also provide an online link with front-desk admissions. The new system will significantly enhance the retrieval and tracking of statistical data.

33. There has also been a renewed emphasis by the Department on reaching out to students and teachers through activities aimed at bringing school groups to Headquarters and bringing the United Nations into the classroom. In connection with various United Nations observances, such as the International Day of Peace, United Nations Day, Human Rights Day and others, the programme "Students' Days at the United Nations" has been developed, inviting students from local schools to Headquarters for complimentary guided tours and specially designed half-day programmes. Working closely with faculty and student groups at academic institutions at all levels, United Nations information centres around the world have developed similar programmes, as well as Model United Nations assemblies held over the past year under the auspices of the centres at Accra, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Dhaka, Mexico City, Panama City, Prague, Pretoria, Bogota, Sydney and Tokyo. In addition, a series of seminars and workshops on teaching about the United Nations has been initiated. The first such seminar, held at Headquarters on 27 August 1997, brought together some 175 teachers, school administrators and curriculum experts from New York City and neighbouring school districts. Among the information materials aimed at young people is a special booklet about the United Nations (with an audio version) which is being prepared for the learning disabled and visually impaired.

34. The number of exhibits mounted at Headquarters and coordinated by the Department has increased from 8 in 1995 to 29 in 1997. With new in-house design capability, the Department has expanded its services to other United Nations offices and reduced overall design and production expenses to less than half the cost of exhibits produced in previous years. The use of lightweight materials has also reduced shipping costs, making it possible for five exhibits to travel to nine locations since June 1996 at minimal cost.

35. The annual Information Fair, to be held from 21 to 24 October 1997 and scheduled to include exhibits by some 30

agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, will be redesigned by the Department and will incorporate an Internet café to highlight the Web sites of the United Nations system.

36. Also, as part of its special programmes, the Department arranged for the world premiere of the Walt Disney home video children's film, "Pooh's Grand Adventure: The Search for Christopher Robin", which took place at Headquarters on 31 July 1997. At a premiere party for children prior to the screening which was attended by the Secretary-General, Pooh was presented with the honorary title, "Ambassador to the World's Children". On 8 September, International Literacy Day, the Department organized an observance, in cooperation with the 92nd Street Y Unterberg Poetry Center, to highlight the link between universal literacy and the fight against poverty. Distinguished authors representing all regions of the world read from their work.

V. Implementation of specific information programmes

37. The Promotion and Public Services Division of the Department continues to carry out the task of developing thematically integrated information programmes on United Nations priority issues. The focus is on implementing information strategies, promotional activities and public services that highlight the Organization's role in furthering sustainable development, peace and security, democracy, human rights and humanitarian assistance, and social and economic development.

38. The Department's many mandates in the area of social and economic development have often created competing voices for its resources. Great effort has been made to ensure the development of communications programmes and services that will meet the demands for the promotion of follow-up on a variety of issues, such as the recent cycle of major international conferences; observances of international days, years and decades; preparations for special sessions of the General Assembly; and ongoing or special issues requiring immediate publicity.

39. Development Update, a bi-monthly publication of the Department, continues to be the only publication reflecting system-wide development activities, including those in follow-up to the cycle of international conferences held during the 1990s. It has been well-received by academics, policy makers, economists and officials of the United Nations system. Although consideration is being given to revamping this valuable product, resource constraints have put the future of this publication in jeopardy.

40. The Division continues to follow closely the priority issues of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies — in particular the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs — in order to ensure that information materials produced by the Department advocate and promote the most current aspects of the United Nations development and human rights agenda. Also, the Department works closely with substantive offices throughout the Secretariat on these and other issues.

41. In early 1997, consultations were initiated with the Centre for Human Rights, international non-governmental organizations and the media on the thematic messages and public information programme for the forthcoming year-long observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, to be launched on Human Rights Day, 10 December 1997. A special poster has been issued in English, French and Spanish and is being widely disseminated. A journalist round-table meeting on human rights, originally scheduled for 1996, will be held in conjunction with the launch. A media kit is being prepared for the occasion, as well as an exhibit. Many activities will take place in coordination with United Nations information centres and services throughout the world.

42. Planning is also under way for the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on drug issues, to be held at Headquarters in June 1998, while discussions have also begun on a communications strategy and programme of activities for the International Year of Older Persons in 1999.

43. Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 were an important focus of the Department's activities during the reporting period. The print and audio-visual products by the Department reflected the unified United Nations message concerning the myriad aspects of sustainable development. An Interdepartmental Task Force, established in September 1996, developed the priority themes to be advocated and promoted in public information materials. The Department also worked closely with the secretariats of the Conventions on Biodiversity, Desertification and Climate Change and the Agreement on High Seas Fishing, as well as with organizations of the United Nations system represented in

the Joint United Nations Information Committee to obtain the information required for the preparation of publicity materials and to respond to questions from the media and non-governmental organizations. A working group of the Joint United Nations Information Committee, convened and chaired by the Department, met regularly at Headquarters to discuss aspects of publicity for the special session. Starting in the week before the session, the Department organized daily briefings for journalists attending the session. Some 880 media representatives registered for the event, in addition to the accredited press corps. The review undertaken after the special session confirmed that media outreach and contacts from Headquarters and through United Nations information centres and services had been wide-ranging and effective.

44. The Department's activities continue to reflect the important role that public information can play in building support for, and complementing, the Organization's efforts to promote and maintain international peace and security. In operational terms, progress continues to be made towards improving the planning, coordination and support of information components in peacekeeping and other field missions.

45. As part of that effort, in March 1997, the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations convened a two-day seminar on public information policies and practices for field missions, with partial financial support from the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. For the first time, current and former public information staff of some 21 field missions, along with Headquarters officials, representatives of United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and other organizations, as well as Member States, gathered to discuss the public information lessons learned in field missions. Their comments have been reflected in a draft manual of guidelines for public information components in United Nations peacekeeping and other field missions, which will be submitted for endorsement by the Interdepartmental Working Group on Public Information for Peacekeeping and Other Field Missions. At the Seminar, consensus emerged on two critical issues: the need to position public information as a strategic component in all United Nations peacekeeping operations by providing the support required to enable public information units and personnel to carry out their work; and that United Nations peacekeeping and other missions in the field would benefit from well-planned, well-coordinated public information efforts, both in mission areas and globally.

46. The contribution of radio broadcasting to peacekeeping has been amply demonstrated in the past year, notably in the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), the United Nations Angola Verification Mission, the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Department has assisted the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in addressing a variety of issues related to these radio operations, including the identification of qualified personnel to staff radio programming and broadcasting operations, and the exploration of possible cooperation with non-governmental organizations and others engaged in radio broadcasting initiatives in conflict areas.

47. Television programming and broadcasting have also been important elements in the public information components of field missions in Angola, Croatia and Haiti. Despite the demonstrated value of these initiatives, however, missions often face difficulties in securing in a timely manner adequate staff and equipment for television operations in the area. The Department provided a television producer to UNTAES in order to generate mission television programming for the run-up to the municipal elections in the area under the mission's authority. The Department also continues to make every effort, within the resources available, to produce and disseminate internationally timely material on the Organization's peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts.

48. The landmine issue straddles the areas of humanitarian law and assistance, sustainable development and disarmament. The Department has worked closely with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to develop a multifaceted exhibit for display at Headquarters and at the Tokyo conference on anti-personnel landmines held in March 1997, as well as on an accompanying video which highlighted the economic and social impact of landmines and the suffering that they cause.

49. The third edition of *Blue Helmets* was published in English in December 1996 and in French in August 1997. As a unique reference work, the 800-page third edition has been well-received by policy makers, practitioners and serious students of United Nations peacekeeping. In December 1996, the first *Year in Review of UN Peace Missions*, issued in English and French, was published. The Department has also worked with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq to develop a coordinated approach to information activities and to produce press materials on the implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995).

50. In line with the decision of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping at its most recent session, considerable

progress has been made on planning a public affairs campaign to mark the fiftieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping in 1998. The campaign will be aimed at achieving a better public understanding of the many facets of United Nations peacekeeping, while honouring those who have served the United Nations operations.

51. In accordance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Department continued its special information programme on the question of Palestine. In that context, it organized an international seminar, entitled "The Peace Process: The Challenges Ahead", which was held at Athens on 26 and 27 May 1997. The seminar brought together senior journalists representing prominent media organizations from all regions of the world, academics and experts, and officials of the Palestinian Authority. The seminar examined the status of the peace process and the implementation of peace agreements. After the seminar, a fact-finding mission of eight international journalists travelled to Cairo and Amman.

52. From 15 September to 7 November 1997, the Department is holding its third training programme for Palestinian media practitioners. Ten journalists will attend the programme which will include briefings by United Nations officials at Headquarters, a week's programme in Washington D.C., a skills training workshop at CNN headquarters at Atlanta and a two-week programme of classes at the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs.

53. The Department's 1997 training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries, which is taking place from 15 September to 23 October 1997, will provide junior and mid-level media professionals with in-depth knowledge of the work of the United Nations and its agencies and programmes by giving them six weeks of intensive training during the regular session of the General Assembly. While at Headquarters, they also serve as United Nations correspondents for their own media outlets and report on the activities of the Organization. To date, nearly 300 journalists from almost 150 countries have participated in the programme. The participants in the 1997 programme were from Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Bhutan, Chile, Ecuador, the Gambia, Mozambique, Nepal, the Niger, the Philippines, Samoa, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Yemen.

VI. United Nations information centres

54. The network of United Nations information centres gives a global dimension to the information programmes of the United Nations. Information centres are an essential partner in this effort, whether establishing strong working relationships with the local media and responding to their inquiries; cooperating with civil society and other local partners to promote major United Nations themes; disseminating the Department's products, such as booklets, brochures or United Nations radio and video programmes; maintaining reference libraries; translating the Department's material into local languages; servicing visits of the Secretary-General and other senior officials to their host countries; or maintaining liaison with Governments.

55. During the past year, the information centres have complemented efforts at Headquarters aimed at increasing public understanding of the United Nations in local communities. They also publicized the findings of the major reports of the United Nations system and organized, on a regular basis, briefings, exhibits, film screenings, press conferences, round-table meetings and workshops to promote greater awareness of the work of the United Nations on a variety of issues.

56. On their own or in cooperation with local partners, the information centres translated some 60 United Nations publications and the Department's back grounders into more than 24 local languages. In 1996, the information centres at Buenos Aires, Brazzaville, Brussels, Jakarta, Madrid, Manila, New Delhi, Port of Spain, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo and Windhoek, as well as information services at Amman and Geneva, for the first time organized local equivalents of the annual conference for non-governmental organizations held at Headquarters. Many information centres formed local partnerships with non-governmental organizations to arrange seminars, round-table meetings, background briefings and radio and television interviews to highlight the progress made on the issue of sustainable development.

57. During 1996-1997, the Department intensified its efforts to upgrade the electronic communications capabilities of its field offices. Fifty staff members from 18 information centres completed training in computer applications studies in 1996, and an additional 150 staff members will complete training by the end of 1997. Almost 200 units of upgraded computer equipment were provided to all information centres as part of an intensive replacement programme. With the installation of the most efficient systems in 14 additional information centres, electronic mail capability has now been extended to 60 information centres.

58. Taking advantage of the Internet, and assessing the local situation, information centres at Bucharest, Lisbon, London, Manila, Mexico City and Rome, as well as the information service at Bangkok, have developed their own

home pages, some in local languages. Web navigating capabilities have also been introduced at 28 information centres, providing them with direct access to the Internet, optical disk system and the Web sites of other organizations of the United Nations family, thus further strengthening their role as local focal points for information from the United Nations system.

59. United Nations information centres represent some 40 per cent of the Department's human resources. Since 1992, however, they have experienced a 40 per cent cut in the number of Professional-level posts and a 15 per cent reduction in local-level posts. Thirty-nine posts in the Professional category and 254 local-level posts (including 50 National Officer and 204 General Service posts) were allocated to the information centres during the 1996-1997 biennium. At present, only 26 information centres — 13 of which are in developing countries — are headed by Professional staff members of the Department. In order to maintain programme delivery in the face of limited resources, the Department has endeavoured to enhance the role of national information officers. As the importance of this category of staff increases, training opportunities and prospects for career development will need to be enhanced.

60. As mandated by the General Assembly, and in line with the new reform measures, the Department is continuing the process of integrating United Nations information centres with the field offices of UNDP on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with host Governments, while ensuring that the functional autonomy of the centres is not adversely affected. At Headquarters, a joint working group, composed of representatives of the Department and UNDP, meets from time to time to discuss aspects of the relationship between the information centres and UNDP. In its evaluation of the integration exercise, however, the Department has found that functional autonomy is not always respected and programme delivery is adversely affected in the majority of the information centres integrated with UNDP.

61. The Department also continues to work closely with host Governments to secure financial contributions towards the operations of the information centres. The results, however, have varied. The Department is continuing its negotiations with host Governments in a number of countries in an effort to encourage both timely payment and greater financial support for the operation of the information centres.

62. The centres have continued to play an important role in providing institutional assistance — both information and non-information related — to various parts of the United Nations system. Through surveys of local media, information centres provide feedback on trends in public opinion and United Nations coverage. They are also frequently requested to assist visiting senior United Nations officials and, in some cases, attend meetings or conferences on behalf of various United Nations offices, and perform other functions, as required.

VII. Library services

63. New technology, with its ability to eliminate geographic and physical boundaries and facilitate cost-effective information dissemination, continues to have a strong impact on the role and programme delivery of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. Electronic subscriptions to on-line news services and magazines have proved more timely and proportionately less expensive than their print counterparts and require less processing time. Efforts are therefore being pursued to replace print with electronic subscriptions wherever possible and to proactively initiate electronic resource-sharing (and, where feasible, cost-recovery) throughout the system.

64. The Library has launched an electronic "UN in the News" service which offers daily desktop delivery of major news stories concerning the Organization to nearly 1,200 staff members throughout the world. In addition, there has been a dramatic expansion in the electronic dissemination of time-critical information through electronic mail, both to permanent missions and to staff at Headquarters and abroad.

65. The Library has also strengthened and expanded its training programme in electronic information retrieval for all delegates and staff affiliated with the United Nations to include basic, advanced and highly specialized courses. Between June 1996 and June 1997, over 1,400 individuals took part in the programme.

66. Since its launch over a year ago, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library's Internet site has been expanded to include "UN-I-QUE", a searchable database that provides access to the symbols and sales numbers of a broad range of United Nations documents issued from 1946 to the present. Also available is Documents Alert, a service aimed at highlighting important United Nations documentation as it is issued. The Library has also recently launched United Nations Documentation: Research Guide on the Internet, designed for researchers and information professionals new to United Nations documentation. It provides an overview of the various types of documents and publications issued by the Organization, and gives guidance on where to find

them in either electronic or paper format and how to work with them.

67. The Library has also been active in the expansion of its services via the United Nations Intranet. Its Intranet home page acts as a gateway to its training services and to other information services available through on-line subscription. Also, the Library has posted Cyberlinks, a collection of links to regional and country Internet information resources and news services.

68. In addition, the Library has completed its United Nations Bibliographic Information (UNBIS) indexing for resolutions issued prior to the establishment of UNBIS in 1978. UNBIS now includes resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the Committee on Human Rights adopted during the period 1946-1997, and documents of the International Court of Justice issued during the period 1946-1997. In additional, retrospective indexing of Security Council documents issued prior to the establishment of UNBIS has been initiated. The Library has also completed the conversion of its UNBIS database to the new format required for its Integrated Library Management System. The acquisitions and serials modules were implemented in March 1997 and the cataloguing module in July 1997, and the on-line public access catalogue will be available by the end of 1997.

69. Prompted by the continuing demand for bibliographies on topics of immediate interest to the Organization, the Library has released in both print and electronic formats several additional titles in its ongoing series DHL/USS/ECRD/BIB/-, including a United Nations bibliography in four parts, encompassing United Nations reform, the Security Council, the Charter of the United Nations and peacekeeping operations, as well as a bibliography on the Office of the Secretary-General.

70. As of 30 June 1997, there were 359 United Nations depository libraries located in 142 countries. Their number by region is as follows: Asia and the Pacific (99), Africa (52), Europe (111, with 29 in Eastern Europe and 82 in Western Europe), Latin America and the Caribbean (45), and North America (52, with 40 in the United States of America and 12 in Canada). A grant provided by the Government of Japan and by the University of Brunei Darussalam enabled the Library to conduct a workshop on the use and management of United Nations documentation, which was held at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific from 24 to 27 March 1997. Twenty-eight librarians from depository libraries in Asia and the Pacific participated. Another similar one-week workshop was held at Headquarters from 2 to 6 June 1997, with the participation of 15 librarians from depository libraries in Europe and North America, who attended at their own expense.

71. As requested by the General Assembly in paragraph 19 of resolution 51/138 B, the evaluation of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library was carried out in January 1997, with the assistance of two independent consultants (see A/AC.198/1997/2 and Add.1). The Library was found to be a United Nations-wide resource and an essential part of the infrastructure of the Organization. The consultants considered that it was performing an important role in the delivery of information to its varied clientele, showing sensitivity to the needs of developed as well as developing countries within the constraints of financial resources. Many of the recommendations in the report concerning the use of cost-effective technological innovations endorsed initiatives already under way in the Library. The report was favourably received by the Committee on Information at its nineteenth session.

72. The Department also continued to provide cartographic services for all publications emanating from the Secretariat, most recently for *Blue Helmets*. Also, 11 full-colour maps were prepared for *Humanitarian Report 1997*, issued by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Up-to-date deployment maps for United Nations peacekeeping operations were also posted on the Library's home page. Maps provided by the Department of Public Information have proved to be particularly useful to the Security Council, with several thousand copies of coloured maps being distributed for its use over the past year. To further facilitate Security Council consultations, the digital display of these maps was introduced in August.

VIII. United Nations Publications Board and marketing of United Nations publications

73. The Publications Board, under the Chairmanship of the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, met in December 1996 and June 1997 to consider a number of publications policy matters. It approved revised administrative instructions relating to the work of the United Nations libraries and procedures for the issuance of newsletters and maps. The Board also considered the proposal for a peer review of technical publications. Through the monthly meetings of its Working Committee, the Board continued to coordinate and monitor the 1996-1997

publications programme of the United Nations. In addition, during the reporting period, the Working Committee reviewed and approved the planned publications for the 1998-1999 biennium.

74. Increased inter-agency cooperation has led to agreements for the Department's sales area to market publications by UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations University and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. The Department has continued to expand the outreach of the Organization by negotiating with commercial publishers throughout the world the production of language versions of United Nations publications. The end result of these external publishing activities has been wider exposure for the Organization's publications, as well as significantly increased royalty revenues.

75. The development of the Internet into a worldwide dissemination channel has opened up new product and marketing opportunities in the sales area. For example, an Internet version of the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* has been launched, while other initiatives include the sale of subscriptions to United Nations documentation on the optical disk system, as well as the development of the United Nations Treaties Collection as an on-line subscription service. A publications home page has been introduced to complement the existing on-line sales catalogue, and electronic mail is used on a regular basis to keep key customers informed of new United Nations publications.

76. One of the Department's most acclaimed activities is the CyberSchoolBus. This interactive educational service, funded through the Global Teach-in educational trust fund, has won a number of international awards and established a wide following. It offers a curriculum on key world issues in a visually stimulating and content-rich environment on the United Nations Web server. The CyberSchoolBus provides real-time projects, weekly quizzes and resources for teachers, students and the public at large. Innovative features have been added, such as the Model United Nations site, and InfoNation, an interactive database containing key information about Member States. Students around the world are given an opportunity to learn about the work of the United Nations system through electronic mail and live chat sessions. School kits adapted for the CyberSchoolBus are also available in French and Spanish. After its successful debut in 1996, a number of dynamic new projects have been developed, such as a peace poem which was launched on 16 September 1997, the International Day of Peace, inviting schools around the world to reflect on the ideal and reality of peace and to cooperate in the writing of an electronic, global poem, and a project, entitled "Equal Dignity, Equal Rights: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 50", which is being undertaken to educate schoolchildren of all ages about the principles of human rights. There is also a project to raise consciousness about the scourge of landmines. New partnerships with international educational programmes, non-governmental organizations and others should ensure even greater participation in this project.

IX. Publishing activities

77. Attractive, relevant and timely publications remain at the core of the Department's efforts to communicate to a widening audience the work and achievements of the United Nations system as a whole. The effectiveness of a revitalized publications strategy, based on well-targeted products and utilizing advanced publishing technology — including electronic dissemination — is already apparent. With more of the Department's products being offered for sale, revenues from them have more than doubled since 1994 as carefully targeted mailing lists, in addition to traditional dissemination channels, have led to higher visibility of a number of its publications. Also, posting of specially-tailored versions of publications on the Internet has vastly expanded their outreach potential in a growing number of countries. In addition, the streamlining of the design and production procedures, achieved through the use of advanced desktop publishing technology, enables the Department to provide quicker and more efficient servicing of the publishing needs of the entire Secretariat.

78. Continuing the fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and the World Bank, negotiations have been undertaken to enhance the value of *Development Business*, the Department's bi-weekly publication, which is the only source of procurement information for developing countries and entirely self-supporting. Its offshoots now include an Internet version available to subscribers for a set fee.

79. Strongly favourable feedback from senior officials and other organizations of the system is further testimony that the Department's publishing strategy is on-target and effective. As part of this strategy, the format and content of many of its existing publications have been thoroughly revised. *The UN Chronicle*, for example, is being reoriented to include more immediate news on United Nations departments and on organizations of the system, and to highlight the national and international impact of their work. Changes include added emphasis on feature articles and articles by, and interviews with, senior officials and other international figures on issues relevant to the work of the United Nations. Greater coverage is also being given to the

less visible activities of the United Nations system, especially in the economic and social fields, which directly affect the lives of individuals. Reform measures, including a regular costwatch on budgetary issues, are being prominently covered, reflecting the interest in these questions in many countries. This reorientation has been backed by much greater use of graphic material to enhance presentation. Excerpts from the *UN Chronicle* have been posted on the United Nations home page as part of a drive to increase sales.

80. Similarly, the Department's publication, *Image & Reality*, the single publication devoted to help correct common misconceptions about the United Nations, has been thoroughly revised to counter criticisms about the Organization, both in specific areas such as peacekeeping and more generally as part of current debate over reform. A simple question-and-answer format, coupled with separate texts giving more detailed information, makes the publication particularly reader-friendly. Published initially in January 1997, demand has been so high that another, updated edition was produced in August, an example of the increased speed of response and flexibility provided by advanced publishing technology and greater use of internal printing capacity. The format of this publication has also made it particularly suitable for adaptation to the Internet, and all three language versions have been posted.

81. A new series, entitled *UN Briefing Papers*, provides a further example of the Department's efforts to promote in its publications a wider understanding of the activities of the United Nations family. Replacing *Notes for Speakers*, the series offers enhanced sales potential, while still providing the substantive and concrete information on the Organization's achievements required by redisseminators of United Nations information. The first issue highlights the central role of the United Nations in the follow-up to recent world conferences. Other publications, most notably *Basic Facts About the United Nations*, are similarly being redesigned in format and content to enhance their effectiveness, as well as to increase their focus on the activities of the entire United Nations system.

82. In addition to addressing the key development issues affecting the region, *Africa Recovery*, in a special arrangement with UNDP, features regular coverage of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, as well as coverage of the peacekeeping and humanitarian work of the United Nations in Africa. This publication also is available on the Internet.

83. Cooperation between the Department and an outside publisher has been instrumental in accelerating production of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*. Thanks in part to funding made available through the external publisher, two issues of the *Yearbook* were produced in the period under review: the 1995 edition (which included a special section on the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization) and the 1989 backlog edition. The remaining backlog of this publication now consists only of the 1990 Yearbook.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/52/21).

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference*, resolution I, annex II.

Annex

Major activities of the Department of Public Information in accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/138 B*

I. Institutional publications

		DPI and/or Sales No.
1	*Renewal amid Transition: Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 1997* released in English and French in September, and in Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish in October	1927 (97.I.23)
2	*Yearbook of the United Nations*, vol. 49 (1995), released in English in April	(96.I.1)
	Yearbook of the United Nations, vol. 43 (1989), released in English in September	(97.I.11)
3	*UN Chronicle* (magazine): vol. XXXII, No. 4, 1995, issued in Chinese in June and in Russian in August; vol. XXXIII, No. 2, 1996, issued in French in December 1996; vol. XXXIII, No. 3, 1996, issued in English and French in March; vol. XXXIII, No. 4, 1996, issued in English in April; vol. XXXIV, No. 1, 1997, issued in English in May; and vol. XXXIV, No. 2, 1997, issued in English in June	USPS 647-380
4	*Image and Reality*, booklet released in English in January and revised in August; issued in French and Spanish in September	1838 and Rev.1 (E.96.I.31) (E/F/S.97.I.13)
5	*The United Nations and the Independence of Eritrea*, Blue Book series, released in English in December 1996	1850 (96.I.10)
6	*Understanding the United Nations: The Official Guidebook*, released in English in December (1996) and in May	1744 (97.I.8)
7	*Charter of the United Nations*, book reprinted in French in June and in Spanish in May	511
8	*UN in Brief*, 1997 edition, booklet released in English in September	1893
9	*UN Briefing Papers: The World Conferences — Developing Priorities for the 21st Century*, booklet released in English in May and in French in June	1816 (97.I.5)
10	*An Agenda for Democratization*, booklet released in English in December 1996	1867
11	*Dear United Nations: How to Order UN publications; Where to Find Freebies; What is on the Internet*, brochure released in English in June	1887
12	*Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the United Nations*, booklet released in English and French in June	1888
13	*Renewing the United Nations — A Programme for Reform*, booklet released in English and French in July	1918

* All months given are in 1997, unless otherwise indicated.

		DPI and/or Sales No.
14	*Global Vision, Local Voice: A Strategic Communications Programme for the United Nations; Report of the Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities*, booklet released in English in August and French in September	1924
15	"United Nations conferences and observances", reference paper released in English in February and in French and Spanish in March	Ref. paper No. 36
16	*List of Depository Libraries Receiving United Nations Material* (multilingual)	ST/LIB/12/Rev.14
17	*The Office of the United Nations Secretary-General*, released in English in January	DHL/USS/ECRD/BIB/2
18	*Les Nations Unies, 1945-1996, une bibliographie sélective* (titres français), released in March	DHL/USS/ECRD/BIB/

II. Thematic publications

A. Advancement of women

1	*Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, brochure released in English in March	1525/Rev.1
2	*Summary of the Platform for Action for Women*, reprinted in English in June	1762
3	*Fifty Years: United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, 1947-1997*, booklet released in English in February	1894
4	"Women: at a glance", fact sheet released in English, French and Spanish in February	1862/Rev.1
5	"International Women's Day (1997)", fact sheet released in English, French and Spanish in February/March	1878
6	"Women: the right to reproductive and sexual health", backgrounder released in English, French and Spanish in February	1877
7	"Women: Commission on the Status of Women", backgrounder released in English in February	1889
8	"Women: global gender agenda and the UN", backgrounder released in English in February	1890
9	"Platform for Action for Women", booklet reprinted in English in February	1766
10	"Fourth World Conference on Women Platform for Action: strategic objective K — women and the environment", leaflet released in English in March	1899

B. Economic and social development

1	*Development Update*, bi-monthly newsletter, Nos. 18/19, 20 and 21 released in English	1452
2	*Development Business*, twice monthly periodical, Nos. 454-471 released in English	
3	"World Economic and Social Survey, 1997", press release issued in English and French in June	1912/ECOSOC

		DPI and/or Sales No.
4	"1997 Report on the World Social Situation", press release issued in English in February	1882
5	"1997 Report on the World Social Situation", executive summary released in English and French in February	1883
6	"UN: full employment an attainable goal", press release issued in English in February	1884
7	"Logo for the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)", press release issued in English, French and Spanish in March	1886/POV
8	"The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond", backgrounder released in English in June	1769
9	*Habitat Agenda and Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements: Summary*, brochure released in French and Spanish in February	1846/HAB/CON
10	*Habitat Agenda and Istanbul Declaration*, booklet released in English in May	1859/HAB/CON
11	*World Summit for Social Development: The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action*, book released in Spanish in February	1707
12	*DPI/NGO: 50th Annual Conference: Building Partnerships*, booklet released in English/French in September	1915
	C. Africa Recovery	
	Africa Recovery, quarterly periodical, vol. 10, No. 4, issued in English in May, issued in French in June; vol. 11, No. 1, issued in English in August, issued in French in September	
	D. Peace and security	
1	"United Nations peacekeeping operations", backgrounder released in English in May	1634/PKO/Rev.6
2	"The United Nations and the situation in Liberia", reference paper released in English in March	1697/Rev.1
3	*The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peacekeeping*, book released in French in July	1800/PKO (96.I.14)
4	*United Nations Peacekeeping*, booklet released in Spanish in April	1827
5	"Year in review 1996: UN peace missions", pamphlet released in French in May	1861
6	"The implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995) and the memorandum of understanding", press kit with seven enclosures released in English in April	1901
7	"United Nations peacekeeping at a glance", leaflet released in English in May and in French and Spanish in September	1903
8	"United Nations special mission to Afghanistan", information note released in English in September	1931
9	*United Nations Seminar on Public Information Policies and Practices for Field Missions*, booklet released in English in September	

		DPI and/or Sales No.
	E. Human rights	
1	*United Nations Declaration and International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, booklet released in English in June	858/HR/Rev.1
2	*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, poster/brochure reprinted in English, French and Spanish in February, and in Arabic, Chinese and Russian in September	1653
3	*Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance*, booklet released in English, French and Spanish in March	1709/HR
4	"International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, 1995-2004", poster released in English in July	1813/IND (97.I.17)
5	*Impact of Armed Conflict on Children: Report of Graça Machel, Expert of the Secretary-General of the United Nations*, booklet released in French and Spanish in January	1834
6	"International Day of World's Indigenous People to be observed on 7 and 8 August 1997 at the United Nations", press release issued in English in August	1921
	F. Sustainable development	
1	"Earth Summit +5: special session of the United Nations General Assembly to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21", information kit with 14 enclosures released in English and French in June	1629/SD
2	*Earth Summit +5*, brochure released in English in January and in French and Spanish in March	1864/SD
3	"Earth Summit +5: global water supplies in peril, UN report finds", press release issued in English in January	1876/SD
4	"Earth Summit +5: United Nations Panel on Forests to hold final session from 11 to 21 February", press release issued in English in February	1881/SD
5	"Earth Summit +5: Challenge for the 21st Century", poster released in English in March	1892/SD (97.I.7)
6	"Earth Summit +5: UN prepares to review progress since 1992 Earth Summit", press release issued in English in March	1898/SD
7	"Earth Summit +5: preparatory talks resume to assess progress since Earth Summit", press release issued in English in April	1902/SD
8	"Earth Summit +5: Rio revisited; negotiations for Earth Summit review end with some progress", press release issued in English in April	1904/SD
9	"Earth Summit +5: five years after Rio; where do we stand?", fact sheet released in English in June and July	1910/SD and Add.1
10	"Earth Summit +5: cashing in on environmental concerns", press release issued in English in June	1913/SD
11	"Earth Summit +5: Earth Summit review ends with few commitments", press release issued in English in July	1916/SD

		DPI and/or Sales No.
	G. Fact sheets on the work of the United Nations	
1	"Setting the record straight: some facts about the United Nations", released in English, French and Spanish in February, March and August	1753/Rev.11-13
2	"The United Nations: protecting the global environment", released in English, French and Spanish in August	1814/Rev.3
3	"The UN financial crisis at a glance", released in English, French and Spanish in February, March and August	1815/Rev.9-11
4	"UN peacekeeping: some questions and answers", released in English, French and Spanish in February, March and August	1851/Rev.2-5
5	"United Nations conferences: what have they accomplished?", released in English, French and Spanish in February and August	1825/Rev.3-4
6	"Setting the record straight: UN salaries and benefits", released in English, French and Spanish in March	1891
7	*Setting the Record Straight: Some Facts about the United Nations*, booklet compiling the above six fact sheets, released in English, French and Spanish in March and August	1848/Rev.2-3
8	"DPI: new challenges, new efficiencies", released in English in May	1817/Rev.2
9	"Seven reasons why the UN is for you", released in English in February	1863

III. Briefings for non-governmental organizations

1 "Presentation of UNICEF's State of the World's Children Report, with special emphasis on child labour", 9 January

2 "Sixteenth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)", 16 January

3 "Update on the situation in the Great Lakes region of Africa", 23 January

4 "Update on the Youth Forum held at Vienna, November 1996", 30 January

5 "New directions: UNA-USA", 6 February

6 "UN General Assembly and non-governmental organizations", 13 February

7 "Preparing for the General Assembly special session on Earth Summit +5", 20 February

8 "Environment and sustainable development perspectives from UNEP and UNESCO", 27 February

9 "International Women's Day: women at the peace table", 6 March

10 "Follow-up to the recent session of the Commission for Social Development", 13 March

11 "World Tuberculosis Day: efforts of the United Nations system in fighting diseases", 20 March

12 "One year after the launching of the United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa", 27 March

13 "Work of the General Assembly", 3 April

14 "The Canberra Commission Report on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons", 10 April

15 "Reports on global assessment of fresh water resources and critical trends in sustainable development", 24 April

16 "Teaching about the United Nations", 1 May

17 "Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the five-year review of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development", 8 May

18 "International Day of Families: building families based on partnerships", 15 May

19 "Governance and civil society organizations", 22 May

20 "The work of the United Nations in the field of human rights", 29 May

21 "UN peacekeeping: lessons learned", 5 June

22 "Health and the environment", 12 June

IV. Video productions

1 "Secrets in the Sand", a 30-minute video documentary relating to aspects of the Agenda for Peace, on efforts to eliminate biological weapons, released in English in February

2 "Cyber Tale of Three Cities", a 30-minute video documentary with Habitat themes, completed in English

3 "Defying the Odds", a 30-minute video documentary on the role of women, completed in Arabic

4 "No Place to Hide", a 30-minute video documentary on peacekeeping issues, completed in Arabic

5 "UN in Action", 33 three-to-five-minute video news magazines released in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish between January and June (Nos. 481-514)

6 "World Chronicle", 19 thirty-minute panel talk shows released in English between January and June (Nos. 653-672)

V. Special radio feature programmes/series

1 Eight radio documentary/news programmes on the activities and achievements of the United Nations in the areas of peacekeeping and peace-building, produced in 5 languages

2 Seven special radio documentary/feature programmes relating to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, produced in 6 languages

3 Twenty-five special telephone feeds to eight radio stations in the Middle East and Africa carried the debate during the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly

4 Thirteen radio documentary programmes on human rights issues, produced in 8 languages

5 Twenty-six weekly 15-minute radio feature/documentary programmes on the advancement of women, released in English

6 Six radio documentary programmes on the advancement of women, produced in Arabic, French and Spanish

7 Twenty-eight radio magazine/feature programmes on issues relating to sustainable development, produced in 12 languages

8 Sixteen radio documentary programmes on population growth and development needs, produced in English, French and Spanish, and adapted into Hindi and Kiswahili

9 Six radio magazine/feature programmes on the economic and social recovery of Africa, produced in English, French and Portuguese

10 Two radio feature programmes relating to human settlements, produced in Hindi and Portuguese

11 Six radio feature programmes on organized crime, drug trafficking and drug abuse, produced in 6 languages

12 Special two-part radio series on the theme of mental health, produced in English

13 Three one-hour live radio interviews with, respectively, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik and the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson; broadcasts were also made available on the Internet, courtesy of Media-on-Demand, a New York-based communications company

VI. Electronic publishing

A. DPI publications on-line

1 "Renewal amid transition: annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the organization, 1997" (A/52/1) <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/Report97>

2 *UN Chronicle* (extracts) <http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle>

3 *Development Business*: scan-a-bid <http://dsweb.krinfo.ch>

4 *Africa Recovery* <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec>

5 Speech by Secretary-General Kofi Annan to the Organization of African Unity <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol11no1/sgoau>

6 "United Nations conferences and observances" <http://www.un.org/Overview/refpap>

7 "UN briefing papers; the world conferences: developing priorities for the twenty-first century" (abbreviated version) <http://www.un.org/geninfo/bp/worconf>

8 *Image & Reality* <http://www.un.org/geninfo/ir>

9 "Fifty-second session of the General Assembly" (press kit) <http://www.un.org/ga>

10 "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform" <http://www.un.org/reform/track2>

11 "Global vision, local voice: a strategic communications programme for the United Nations; report of the Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities" <http://www.un.org/reform/track2/info/contents>

B. Original DPI output available only on the Internet

1 *CyberSchoolBus*, the United Nations interactive educational Internet site, has had 2,800 000 page hits (January through August). French and Spanish versions of certain modules are now available. New modules included in the site <http://www.un.org/Pubs/cyberschoolbus> are:

(a) MUNDA, a popular discussion area for Model United Nations organizers and participants

(b) The health module: teaching units on infectious diseases

(c) On-line celebrations of international days, such as International Women's Day, World Health Day and International Day of Peace

(d) Web chats with ambassadors and experts

2 *The United Nations Bookshop Home Page* — allows customers around the world to visit the United Nations Bookshop and view its variety of products, including books, posters and gift items <http://www.un.org/Pubs/whatnew/bookstor.htm>

C. Home page design/United Nations materials made available by the Department of Public Information on the Internet

1 *General Assembly Fifty-second Session Home Page*. Created and designed by the Department of Public Information. Among the United Nations materials made available on this home page by the Department are:

(a) Annotated preliminary list of items to be included in the agenda of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly (English and French)

(b) Supplementary list of items proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly (English and French)

(c) Provisional agenda of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly (English and french)

(d) Information for delegations (English and French)

2 *UN Reform Home Page*. Created and designed by the Department of Public Information. Among the United Nations materials made available on the home page by the Department are:

(a) Secretary-General's report on reform

(b) Graphs

(c) *Re-form Bulletin*

3 Texts of many of the resolutions adopted at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly

4 Final text of the agenda for development

5 Information guide for services to the public

6 1997 calendar of special events at United Nations Headquarters

7 All daily press releases, daily highlights and text of the weekly "World in Review" radio programme

8 Maps of peacekeeping operations prepared by the Department of Public Information

9 The Department's photographs (number increases each week)

10 Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and Economic Commission for Africa home pages were processed by the Department of Public Information

D. DHL on-line research tools

1 "Documents alert", a service to identify important United Nations documents; includes brief annotations

2 "UN-I-QUE" (United Nations Information Quest), a ready-reference file providing quick access to document symbols and sales numbers of United Nations materials, from 1946

3 United Nations documentation research guide, provides for librarians and information professionals an overview of the types of United Nations documents available

E. Joint ventures

1 Launching of the Internet subscription service for the United Nations optical disk system, a joint venture with the Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Administration and Management

2 Posting on the Internet of audio content of the "World in Review" radio programme through Media-on-Demand, a New York-based communication company

VII. Other major activities

1	"Daily Highlights"	daily
2	Press releases produced in English and French	2 006
3	Radio news magazines produced in the official and 9 other languages	469
4	Radio features/regional news magazines produced in the official and 9 other languages	404
5	"World in Review" radio programmes and updates produced and distributed in English	31
6	Radio telephone feeds transmitted in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese	526
7	Operation of electronic bulletin board updating United Nations meetings at Headquarters and daily press briefings, in English, French and Spanish (number of bulletins)	381
8	Events covered by United Nations Television	916
9	In-house tv services (dubbing, mixing, narrating and so forth)	695
10	Television services to outsiders (broadcasters, correspondents)	259
11	Number of edited television news feeds and packages	1 955
12	Requests met for television material and copies of tapes	650
13	Audio feeds, interviews and radio programmes	1 089
14	Requests met for dubbing and loans from the audio library	15 590
15	Requests met for recordings from the visual library	325
16	Requests met for video tape duplication	328
17	Number of United Nations photographs downloaded from the United Nations home page on the Internet, January-August 1997	573 593
18	Photographs of meetings and events produced and distributed	1 335
19	Requests met from the photographic library	1 899
20	Permanent accreditation of correspondents processed at Headquarters	914
21	Temporary accreditation of correspondents processed at Headquarters	913
22	Accreditation of correspondents processed for the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, held from 23 to 27 June	880
23	Applications processed for new accreditation of non-governmental organizations	960
24	Visitors to non-governmental organization Resource Centre	6 400
25	Participants in the guided tours at Headquarters	289 754
26	Group briefings organized by the Department	667
27	Queries from the public answered by the Public Inquiries Unit at Headquarters	50 170
28	Exhibits shown at Headquarters	17
29	United Nations depository libraries throughout the world	359

30	United Nations documents and publications acquired by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library	49 824
31	Specialized agencies documents and publications acquired by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library	6 278
32	United Nations permanent missions with on-line access to UNBIS	104
33	Group training sessions organized by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library on United Nations documentation, the Internet and electronic news gathering	153
34	Preparation of new maps	46
35	Revision of peacekeeping maps	19
36	Provision to the Security Council of colour copies of maps	1 620
37	Reference queries answered by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library	40 730
38	Loans processed by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (number of pieces)	15 416
39	Exchange arrangements by Dag Hammarskjöld Library with institutions throughout the world	1 228
40	Materials photocopied for Dag Hammarskjöld Library users (number of pages)	385 990
41	Acquisitions of United Nations system archival material and external publications (number of items)	37 213
42	Electronic resources available in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (number of databases)	126
43	Records added to UNBIS	31 360
44	*United Nations Publications* catalogue for 1997-1998, released in English and French in June (also available on the Internet)	50 000 15 000
45	*United Nations Publications: Environmental Issues*, 1997 catalogue, released in English in June (also available on the Internet)	25 000
46	*Blue Helmets*, promotional brochure released in English in May	25 000
47	Miscellaneous promotional brochures for United Nations publications produced throughout the period	150 000
48	Miscellaneous exhibits organized to promote publications	28

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Agenda item 29

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/7 of 25 October 1996, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". In that resolution, the Assembly welcomed the conclusion on 24 July 1996 of the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) (A/51/402, annex) and considered that the signature of the agreement constituted an important step for increased and strengthened cooperation between the two organizations.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union" and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at that session on various aspects of cooperation that had taken place between the two organizations in implementation of the cooperation agreement.

II. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

3. Cooperation between the United Nations and IPU has been strengthened since the conclusion of the cooperation agreement and the ensuing period has seen several examples where the two organizations now undertake joint and mutually reinforcing action.

A. Promotion of peace and security

4. At the IPU Conference held at Seoul in April 1997, the United Nations was given support during the debate and in a resolution on security issues, in which the Conference called for the United Nations to be provided with the requisite financial, human and technical resources. At the same Conference, IPU discussed and adopted a resolution on the emergency situation which prevailed at the time in both Albania and the then Zaire. On Zaire, the Conference called upon the parties to the conflict to adhere to and implement the United Nations five-point peace plan and called for support for the joint United Nations/Organization of African Unity Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region.

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5. Continued parliamentary support was given to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his mission of good offices to secure a settlement of the Cyprus problem. The IPU Council has repeatedly urged all mediators in the Cyprus issue to harmonize their efforts with those of the Secretary-General. Recently, it again called upon all interested parties to abide by United Nations resolutions and repeated that the only framework for the settlement of the Cyprus issue was the one defined by the United Nations.

6. The United Nations efforts to secure a worldwide ban on anti-personnel mines were given support by IPU. Throughout 1996 and 1997, it carried out an extensive parliamentary survey to determine what action had been or was being taken with a view to a ban and the conclusion of a treaty on the subject, to be followed by rapid national ratification and the adoption of the corresponding legislation and regulations. IPU also gave its support to the call for funding the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance set up by the United Nations in 1995.

B. Promotion of representative democracy

7. Representative democracy is a field in which the United Nations works closely with IPU. This includes action in favour of the participation of women in political life, which is at the core of IPU work to promote representative democracy.

8. The United Nations has been receiving increasing support from IPU in the provision of technical assistance and advisory services to parliaments. Sometimes, this activity is carried out in the context of a peacekeeping operation (e.g., in Haiti, where IPU is currently implementing a comprehensive million-dollar programme to assist the parliament). In other instances, it is the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) who directly requests IPU assistance. IPU is currently implementing projects or otherwise extending support to national parliaments in response to such requests in Cape Verde, Gambia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Rwanda, South Africa, Viet Nam and Yemen.

9. UNDP works closely with IPU and often provides funding and support to IPU projects to assist parliaments as part of its promotion of good governance. In that context, the two organizations are examining means to expand further their collaboration in project execution. UNDP received substantive support from IPU for the International Conference on Governance for Sustainable Growth and Equity, which was organized by UNDP in New York in July 1997. In particular, IPU co-sponsored with UNDP the Parliamentarians' Forum, which brought together members of parliaments from some 75 countries.

10. The ongoing preparations by the United Nations for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights received backing from IPU at its meeting at Cairo in September 1997 through the adoption, by its Council, of a resolution recommending parliamentary action to mark the anniversary and calling upon parliaments to provide support to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. In the resolution the Council also called upon all Parliaments and their members to ensure prompt ratification of the international and regional human rights treaties, as well as harmonization of the national legislation with the norms and standards contained in those instruments with a view to their full implementation. The Cairo meeting also assisted United Nations system-wide efforts on behalf of children by adopting recommendations for parliamentary action with regard to child labour, commercial and other forms of sexual exploitation of children, and the protection of children in armed conflict. Different United Nations mechanisms for human rights (Commission for Human Rights, human rights treaty bodies, special rapporteurs and working groups) collaborate with the IPU Committee for the Human Rights of Parliamentarians through regular exchanges of information.

11. Following its consideration of a study on democracy, conducted by IPU together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and a panel of international experts, IPU adopted a Universal Declaration on Democracy at its meeting in Cairo. The Declaration sets out the basic principles of democracy and the elements and standards for the exercise of democratic government, and addresses the international dimension of democracy.

C. Follow-up to major United Nations conferences

12. National parliaments have an important role to play in implementing the outcome of major United Nations conferences. This was recognized by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session when it stated, with reference to the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development, that transparent and participatory processes should be promoted when integrating economic, social and environmental objectives and that "this will require the involvement of national legislative assemblies" (resolution S-19/2, annex, para. 24 (b)).

13. IPU participated actively in the preparation, holding and implementation of the results of the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development. IPU also participated in the 1997 session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly. At its special session, the Assembly received an overall evaluation of parliamentary action to implement Agenda 21 based on a worldwide survey of parliaments which IPU carried out in 1996. The report stressed the lack of financing and the slow transfer of technology impeded implementation of Agenda 21 and called upon Governments to respect the commitments they had already made on behalf of Member States at Rio de Janeiro. The Assembly also received the result of a debate on measures required to change consumption and production patterns so as to achieve sustainable development which IPU had held at Seoul in April 1997, and to which the United Nations had contributed an information paper. The Declaration that emerged from IPU debate urged that Governments and parliaments adopt and implement national and international policies that were really conducive to harmonizing lifestyles with the fundamental principles of sustainable development. The President of the IPU Council called for the required political will and commitment to launch anew the "spirit of Rio". He also reiterated the commitment by parliaments to intensify their work in the field of sustainable development.

14. On the occasion of the World Food Summit in 1997, IPU organized a "Parliamentarians' Day", in which 190 members of parliament from over 70 countries participated. The meeting, which was jointly organized with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), focused on food insecurity and its root causes and on effective follow-up of the results of the Summit. It adopted a Declaration in support of the Summit. At the Summit IPU announced its intention to set up a mechanism to monitor implementation at the parliamentary level of the commitments made in Rome. The IPU Council endorsed the Declaration adopted by the Summit and initiated a process whereby parliaments are encouraged to take action to implement the commitments taken in Rome.

15. At its one hundred sixtieth and one hundred sixty-first sessions, held in April and September 1997 in Seoul and Cairo, respectively, the IPU Conference adopted two resolutions in which it invited all IPU member parliaments to promote the implementation of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the Plan of Action adopted by the World Food Summit;[1] expressed support for the FAO special programme for low-income food-deficit countries, the "Food for All" campaign and "TeleFood 1997", a global telecast which, together with a worldwide "Appeal Against World Hunger", is designed to encourage solidarity in the fight against hunger; and welcome the joint FAO-IPU Inter-parliamentary Conference on agricultural production for attaining the objectives of the World Food Summit while respecting the environment, to be held in Rome in November 1998 at the invitation of the Italian parliament.

16. Joint action by the United Nations and IPU was also undertaken in the follow-up to and implementation of the results of the World Summit for Social Development. In September 1996, the United Nations, UNDP and IPU organized a tripartite meeting at United Nations Headquarters involving representatives of Member States, members of parliament and representatives of United Nations agencies and departments concerned with the follow-up to the Summit. The meeting drew up an initial catalogue of priority measures for action by parliaments to address critical issues relating to poverty eradication, the attainment of the goal of full employment and the realization of social integration. This was subsequently finalized and adopted by the IPU governing bodies and sent to all world parliaments for follow-up and implementation. IPU, at its meeting at Cairo, adopted a resolution on employment in a globalizing world after a debate to which the United Nations contributed an information paper and keynote speaker.

17. IPU has done much to promote the status of women and especially their participation in political life. IPU played an important role in mobilizing parliamentarians in the preparatory process to the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing and during the Conference itself. For example, IPU presented a plan of action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life and held a "Parliamentarians' Day" at which a parliamentary declaration was adopted committing parliaments to follow up on the outcome of the Conference. The United Nations, and in particular the Division for the Advancement of Women, cooperated closely with IPU, throughout the preparatory process of Beijing. Furthermore, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women has participated in the specialized conference of IPU at New Delhi in February 1997 on the theme of towards partnership between men and women in politics. This was an important meeting devoted to follow-up of the Fourth World Conference on Women and was an unprecedented event at the international level since it brought together an equal number of men and women members of parliament from some 80 countries and provided the occasion for innovative debates on ways of ensuring the joint exercise of political responsibilities.

18. As part of the follow-up to the World Conference, the Commission on the Status of Women invited the President of the IPU Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians to its 1997 session to form part of a panel on women in decision-making and to present the work of IPU on the question. Various substantive proposals that had emerged from the IPU debates and studies in recent years were taken up by the Commission. The United Nations has also made good use of the study which the IPU prepared for the New Delhi conference on men and women in politics: democracy still in the making. It was published together with a new colour-coded poster showing on the world map the status of women's participation in parliaments as at 1 January 1997 and since 1945. The study looks at three key areas: women's participation in political parties, in the electoral process, and the space and role they occupy in national parliaments. The United Nations Statistical Division now uses the complete statistical data that IPU has developed on the history and evolution of women's participation in parliament.

III. Concluding remarks

19. The past year has seen a significant strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations system and IPU. Agreements of cooperation have recently been concluded between IPU and UNESCO as well as with FAO. Both of these build upon the example set by the agreement between the United Nations and IPU and advance further the concept of cooperation between parliaments and Governments at the international level.

20. As the Secretary-General mentioned in his programme for reform, parliamentarians are a key group within the constituencies that are acquiring growing importance to the United Nations and which warrant special consideration. National Parliaments, which work together at the world level through IPU, have a major role to play in the pursuit of the goals of the United Nations.

Notes

[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the World Food Summit, Rome, 13-17 November 1996, Part One* (WFS 96/REP) (Rome, 1997, appendix).